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ABSTRACT

THIS PAMPHLET DISCUSSES CHANGES IN ADOLESCENCE AND IS INTENDED FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL USE. THE CHANGES IN ADOLESCENCE ARE JUST PRESENTED IN GENERAL. EACH CHAPTER GOES INTO DETAIL ON SEPARATE ISSUES. CHAPTER TWO IS A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF GROWTH, THE AWKWARD BODY STAGES THAT ADOLESCENTS REACH. CHAPTERS THREE AND FOUR DISCUSS STEPS TOWARD WOMANHOOD AND MANHOOD. BODILY CHANGES ARE EXPLAINED. CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSES PARENTHOOD, CONCEPTION, HEREDITY, AND PARENTAL INFLUENCES. THE FINAL CHAPTER PRESENTS SEVERAL EXAMPLES OF BOY-GIRL RELATIONSHIPS AS WELL AS ASPECTS OF FRIENDSHIP, MAKING FRIENDS, DATING AND GOING STEADY. (KJ)

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Prepared for the Joint Committee on Health Problems in Education of the National Education Association and the American Medical Association

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This series of pamphlets is prepared to help parents and those other adults who may have responsibility and concern in assisting children to form sound ideas and attitudes about family living, including sex education.

The Joint Committee on Health Problems in Education of the National Education Association and the American Medical Association publishes this series. We believe the home is the ideal place for sex education of children and youth. It is also recognized that many parents consider it desirable for the church, the school, or other responsible groups in the community to supplement this education. Thus, the ways in which this series is used will of necessity be dependent upon the judgment of individual parents and of local community groups. This focus of responsibility must be honored and these booklets must in no instance be used without full approval and joint planning from home, school and community.

SEX EDUCATION SERIES

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY, for parents of young children of preschool and early school age.

A STORY ABOUT YOU, for children in grades 4, 5, and 6.

FINDING YOURSELF, for boys and girls of approximately junior high school age.

APPROACHING ADULTHOOD, for young people of both sexes (about 16 to 20 years of age).

FACTS AREN'T ENOUGH, for adults who have any responsibility for children or youth that may create a need for an understanding of sex education.

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Chapter 1

FIND YOURSELF HERE

A new look comes to you in your teens. Because it forecasts the appearance of the man or woman you soon will be, you watch for it eagerly, perhaps impatiently, but it takes several years for this new picture of yourself to develop. These are the years when you change from a child to an adult—the years of adolescence.

The new look, like beauty, is more than skin deep. Glands that produce chemical substances called *hormones** seem to pull the trigger that sets off body changes in size and form. They also give the signal for the development to maturity of the sex organs. Soon after that, you are physically able to become the parent of a child, but that is only part of the story of becoming adult enough to love, marry, have healthy children, and make a happy home.

Along with the new look come new developments in your personality. You want to think things out for yourself and make your own decisions. You have new feelings about friends of the opposite sex, about dates and dating, and the kind of social life you enjoy. Your ideals are likely to become clearer and stronger, and you probably think more about future plans.

It won't be surprising if you find these years of change quite wonderful—and painfully confusing; sad, as well as happy. When you try to put childish thoughts and actions behind you, you may yet feel that you want to cling to them. But when you succeed in your early attempts to act as a young man or woman, you'll feel on top of the world. In view of such ups and downs, it may be several years before you feel comfortable in the world of grown people.

This booklet contains information that may help you to understand yourself in your earlier teens. In reading it, you may find out where you are in your journey toward becoming an adult, especially in your friendships with the other sex, and in other changes related to sexual development.

The following descriptions give a preview of a few experiences

*A *hormone* (hor'-mōn) is a chemical substance formed in one organ or part of the body that is carried in the blood to another organ or part of the body. The latter organ is thereby stimulated by the hormone to some activity. (The pronunciation of technical terms will be shown immediately following the first use of each term in the remainder of this book.)

that are common in the first half of the teens. Some of the stories may have a familiar ring. If you think back over the past year or so, you may remember events in your own life, or experiences of your friends, that are similar.

Tom and Jack Grew Differently

Jack had never minded the fact that his life-long friend, Tom, was two inches taller. However, at fourteen, Tom and several other friends were not only taller, but had more fully developed bodies than Jack's. That summer Jack often refused to go swimming with the other boys because he hated to let them see that he still had the undeveloped body of a young boy, while they had begun to look like young men. Jack needn't have worried. He matured a couple of years later, just as satisfactorily as his friends. Such differences are natural.

Curves Come with Growing Up

Mary and her mother went shopping for a party blouse and skirt for Mary, stopping first to buy her a bra. Mary was a little excited, for it was her first bra, and it was somewhat strange to feel her body take on new, grown-up curves. She was pleased to catch up with her girl friends who already were wearing bras. Her friend, Florence, had begun to wear one at the age of eleven, and at that time was the only girl in her class whose breasts were so fully developed. Now nearly all the girls were wearing bras. Jean, at fourteen, still had a little-girl figure, and felt rather out of step with the other girls.

Girls, as well as boys, have different rates of growing up. In a group of young teen-age girls, you will probably know some who have begun to look like young women, while others have not yet changed in that way. Some will be interested in boys; others will not. Such differences are quite normal.

Attention, Please!

Before you have read very far, perhaps you will recognize this story about a boy who wanted to catch the attention of a girl he admired:

> "The next instant he was out(doors) and 'going on' like an Indian; yelling, laughing, chasing boys, jumping over the fence at risk of life and limb, throwing hand-springs,

standing on his head—doing all the heroic things he could conceive of, and keeping a furtive eye all the while, to see if Becky Thatcher was noticing. But she seemed to be unconscious of it all; she never looked. Could it be possible that she was not aware that he was there? He carried his exploits to her immediate vicinity; came war-whooping around, snatched a boy's cap, hurled it to the roof of the schoolhouse, broke through a group of boys, tumbling them in every direction, and fell sprawling, himself, under Becky's nose, almost upsetting her—and she turned, with her nose in the air, and he heard her say, 'Mf! Some people think they're mighty smart—always showing off!'

"Tom's cheeks burned. He gathered himself up and sneaked off, crushed and crest-fallen."*

When a boy does become interested in a girl, he may not know how to go about winning her friendship. But he can soon learn, if he wants to! Sometimes it is even harder for a young girl than for a young boy to know how to make friends with some of the opposite sex. Do you think girls should try to attract the attention of boys whom they would like to know? If so, how should they do it?

Ease in Dating Comes Slowly

Judy can laugh now, but it hurt when it happened. The party was important because it was her first real date, and because she had a new party dress. In fact, it seemed so important to her that she was rather nervous when Hal arrived. To make matters worse, it was snowing, and she had to wear big, old boots that looked worse than usual with a party dress.

The party was formal, with a reception line for the guests of honor. When Judy had left her wraps on the second floor, she came slowly down the wide, curving stairs, feeling very stately, and hoping that her friends would admire her new dress. Hal met her at the foot of the stairs, and they started down the receiving line. Then Judy happened to look at her feet. In her nervousness, she had forgotten to take off the boots! Was that why people smiled at her as she came down the stairs? She wanted to sink through the floor!

If she had only known it, Hal was so flustered over *his* first date, that he hadn't noticed, and neither had anyone else.

*From: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, by Mark Twain. Copyright 1918 by Harper & Brothers, reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.

Whether you're a boy or a girl, you're likely to meet situations you're not prepared for when you first begin to have dates. With experience, you learn what to do, and begin to feel at ease. Perhaps you have had an experience that was as tragic to you at one time, and as amusing now that you look back, as Judy's tale of the galoshes and the party dress.

Chapter 2

MORE ABOUT THE NEW LOOK

Eventually, the new look brings fresh feminine charm to girls, and masculine vigor to boys. These happy results do not always show at once, for the new look arrives by stages, which it may save you some worry to understand.

Shooting Up

Most young people have a spurt of faster growth just before or during the first half of the teens, which lasts for one or two years. They seem to "shoot up," as people say. After that, growth in height slows down, and stops in the later teens or early twenties.

Girls usually enter this period somewhere from nine to twelve years, and boys somewhat later, between twelve and fourteen, but the period of rapid growth may come a year or so earlier or later than those ages, for either boys or girls.

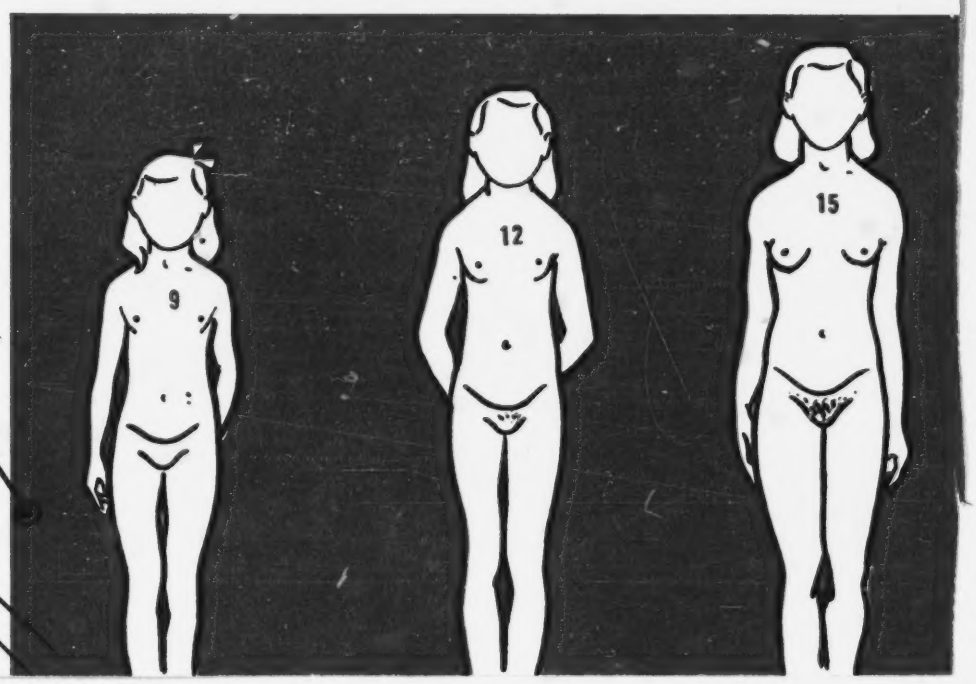
Because boys "shoot up" later than girls, boys of eleven, twelve, or thirteen may be surprised to find that girls of their own age have suddenly grown taller than they. Boys catch up with them by the age of fifteen or so and eventually are likely to be taller than girls.

If you have grown tall at a younger age than your friends and are now much taller than they, you may be glad to know that you probably will stop growing before they do, for an early spurt of growth usually stops earlier. On the other hand, if your friends have been shooting up, and you have not, it's possible that your spurt of growth may start late and that you will keep growing to a later age so that you catch up with some of your friends.

However, the teen-age spurt of growth will not turn a naturally short boy or girl into a tall person, since your heredity has a great deal to do with your height. If you were tall, medium, or short as a young child, you are likely to be tall, medium, or short as an adult, although that is not always the case.

Filling Out

Yes, you'll gain weight, too. The gain is often most noticeable just after growth in height has begun to slow down. Many a girl of twelve or thirteen years gains eight to twelve pounds in a year, but



by age fifteen the yearly gain usually drops to five or six pounds. Boys make their greatest gain in weight a couple of years later than girls. At fourteen or fifteen, many boys gain as much as twelve or fifteen pounds in a year, but the yearly gain soon drops to about half that.

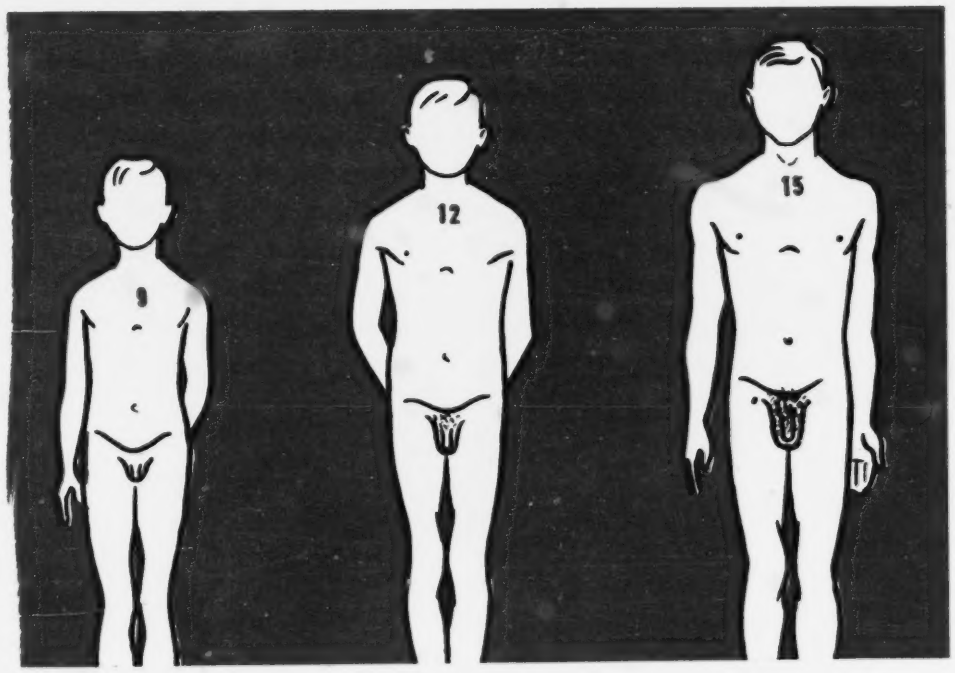
While you're filling out, you may think that you look chubby, but you will probably thin out as you reach full height. It is not wise to reduce unless your physician advises you to do so, and gives directions which you follow carefully.

All Arms and Legs

Have you ever felt that you were "all arms and legs"? This normal feeling may be a temporary part of the new look, because various parts of the body grow at uneven rates at different times of life.

For example, the arms and legs grow slowly in babyhood, but more rapidly from the age of nine or ten years into the teens. Then wrists seem to shoot out of the coat sleeves. When arms and legs are growing fast, the trunk of the body may be relatively short so that the young teen-ager has a high waist and looks all arms and legs. The trunk only lengthens to its full size near the end of one's growth.

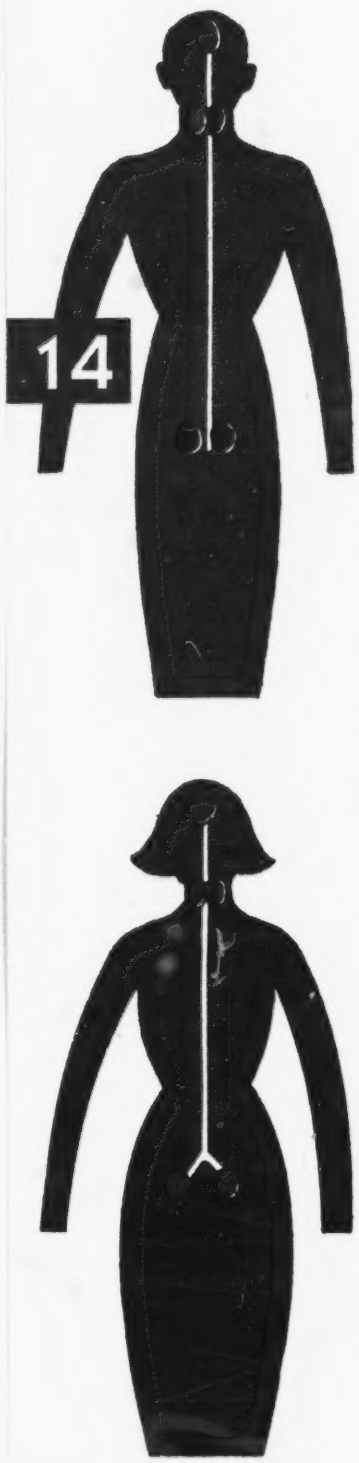
You may have heard that these changes in body proportions make teen-agers awkward. Yet you and your friends use your bodies skillfully and gracefully much of the time, as you play ball, ride your bikes, go dancing, swimming, or hiking, or take part in other sports which teen-agers enjoy. Perhaps awkwardness is more likely to appear when young people feel self-conscious in a strange situation. At any rate, it is better to take part in sports and activities which improve your physical skill than it is to brood over an occasional stumble or slip.



Your Face and Complexion

During the teens, the features of the face take on their adult size and shape, becoming more clearcut. The nose becomes larger with a more definite shape, the mouth becomes fuller, and the chin firmer.

You may be more concerned about your complexion than about changes in your facial structure. During adolescence, many boys and girls are bothered by skin troubles. There may be just a few pimples or blackheads, or the condition may be very troublesome. A physician would call the condition *acne* (ăk′nē). If you are bothered by acne, you should secure your physician's advice about diet, other health habits, and the care of your skin. Sometimes all that is needed is to wash your face carefully several times a day with a mild soap and warm water.



Glands and Growth

Deep in the skull, beneath the brain, there is a small gland called the *pituitary* (pĭ tū′ ĭ tĕr′ ĭ) gland. It is one of the glands which do their work by sending hormones into the blood. The pituitary gland makes several hormones, one of which helps to regulate growth in height and body proportions.

Another hormone of the pituitary gland causes the sex glands of children to mature, usually just before or during the earlier teens. When the sex glands mature they produce their own hormones, which in turn signal the pituitary gland to produce less of the growth hormone. As a result, growth in height slows down not long after boys and girls become sexually mature.

In girls, the sex glands are the two *ovaries* (ō′ vả rĭz), located one on each side in the lower part of the abdomen. In boys, the sex glands are the *testes* (tĕs′ tēz), also called *testicles* (tĕs′ tĭ kls). They are suspended between the legs of boys and men in a sac of skin known as the *scrotum* (skrō′ tum).

The hormones of the ovaries and the testes help to bring about the "new look" during adolescence because they cause certain changes spoken of as "secondary sex characteristics," described below.

In a girl, hormones cause a more feminine appearance as her hips round out and become broader, and her breasts fill out. These changes may begin when a girl is about ten or eleven, or in the early teens. They appear earlier in some girls than in others, as you will remember from the story of Mary's purchase of her first bra. The hormones also cause hair to grow under the girl's arms, and in a tri-

angular patch across the lower part of her abdomen that is known as the *pubic* (pū bĭc) region. Her voice also becomes richer and fuller.

The new curves are attractive, and useful, too, as preparation for motherhood at some future time. The widening of the hips gives a body form more suitable for the growth of a baby in the mother's body and for the baby's birth. The development of the breasts is a prelude to a mother's nursing her baby.

Sometime between the ages of twelve and seventeen, the boy's body begins to take the masculine appearance of a young man, with bigger frame and wider shoulders than in boyhood. However, the boy's hips do not widen as do those of a girl. Hair appears on the pubic region of the boy's abdomen and later under the arms. It may thicken on the chest and other parts of the body. About that time, the boy begins to eye his father's razor, wondering when he can shave! The boy's voice-box also has been growing larger, and the vocal cords longer, so that his voice usually has changed or is changing when he is about fourteen or fifteen.

The part the sex glands play in reproduction will be discussed in the next chapters.

Your Picture of Yourself

Perhaps there is a picture in your mind of yourself as you would like to look when you are a young adult. Well, dreams can be fun! But all sorts of people make up our world; tall, medium, or short; small-boned and slender, big-boned and stocky, or average build. You will be happier if you can learn to enjoy just being yourself, while you make the best of your own height and body build, which are determined largely by your heredity. You *can* improve your posture, your general good looks, and your weight if a physician advises it, by eating wisely, exercising in sports and other physical activities, getting enough sleep, and following other good health practices.

Naturally you want to make a good appearance, partly because you want to be attractive to your friends of either sex. But if you wish you were tall instead of short, or had a firmer chin, or a straighter nose, here's a comforting thought. When boys are asked to list the qualities they like in girls, or girls to say what they like in boys, very little is said about color of eyes, or hair, or other physical qualities which you cannot change. The points most often mentioned have to do with courtesy, friendliness, and other personality traits which you can change.

Chapter 3

STEPS TOWARD WOMANHOOD

The life of every human being begins with the union of two special cells, the sperm cell of the father, and the egg cell of the mother. As a young teen-ager, you are at the time of life when sex organs for the first time become able to produce ripe or mature sperm cells in the male and egg cells in the female. This is one of the signs that you have reached *puberty* (pū′ bĕr tĭ). It means that physically you are able to become the parent of a child, although you need to develop in other ways before you are ready for such a responsibility.

When Ovaries Produce Egg Cells

When a baby girl is born, she already has two almond-shaped ovaries, or sex glands, in the lower part of her abdomen. Although the ovaries are not yet fully developed in babyhood and early childhood, they contain thousands of immature egg cells.

During childhood, the ovaries are rather inactive until the pituitary gland causes them to mature. At this time, they begin to produce the hormone that brings about the secondary sex characteristics described in the last chapter. This hormone also causes the other sex organs to become larger and more mature.

When the ovaries are mature enough, they begin to send out egg cells, and this starts a new cycle of events in the girl's life. First, an egg cell becomes surrounded by a small sac, known as a *follicle* (fŏl′ ĭ kl), and goes to the surface of the ovary. There the follicle opens and releases the ripened egg cell. This process is called *ovulation* (ō′ vū lā′ shun). After ovulation has begun, one egg cell is released about every twenty-eight or thirty days, as a rule, until the girl is a woman of forty-five or more years. Usually only one egg cell is released at a time; alternately from one ovary each month. During a woman's lifetime, several hundred egg cells are released from her ovaries.

The Journey of the Egg Cell

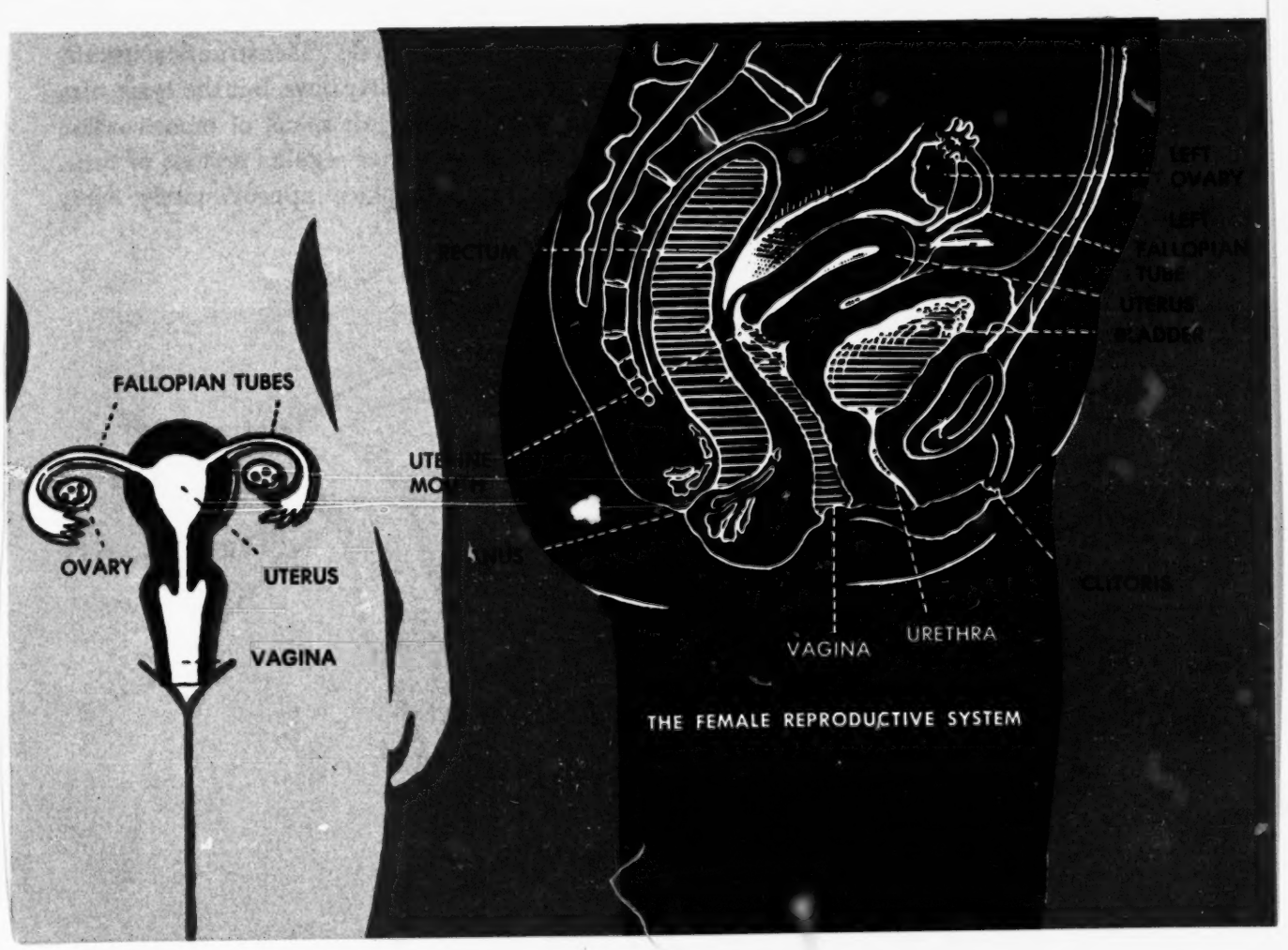
The little egg cell is smaller than a pinpoint, although it is one of the larger cells of the human body. When it first leaves its follicle, it passes into the nearby opening of a tube several inches long, known

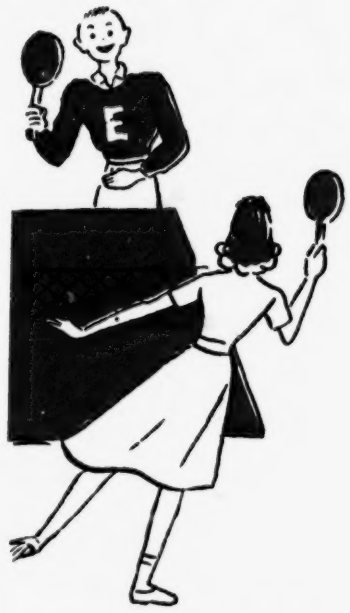
as a *Fallopian* (fă lō′ pĭ ăn) tube. One of these tubes opens near each ovary and provides a passageway for the egg cell into the *uterus* (ū′ tĕr ŭs).

The uterus, or womb (wo͞om), is a thick-walled, muscular, stretchable, hollow part of the body. In size and shape, it is something like a pear, with the larger end up. When an egg cell is fertilized by union with a sperm cell, the fertilized egg cell that is the beginning of a new human life will stay in the uterus, where it will develop into a baby.

The lower end of the uterus opens into the *vagina* (vă jī′ nă), which is a passage connecting the uterus with the outside of the body. The outside opening of the vagina is between the legs, where it is protected by folds of skin and flesh known as the *vulva* (vŭl′ vă). Where the inner folds of the vulva meet in front there is a small, sensitive tip called the *clitoris* (klī′ tŏ rĭs). The opening of the vagina may be partially closed by a rather thick membrane, which is called the *hymen* (hī′ men).

The outside opening of the vagina lies between two other body openings. In front there is the opening for the passage of urine from the body, and behind it there is the *anus* (ā′ nus), which is the opening for the passage of waste from the intestines.





The ovaries, tubes, uterus and vagina are the female sex organs that are inside the body; the vulva and clitoris are external female sex organs.

After a follicle releases an egg cell, the space in the follicle fills with cells called the *corpus luteum* (kor′ pus lu′ tĕŭm), or yellow body. The corpus luteum makes another hormone which causes the soft lining of the uterus to build up some new lining, in which there is an increased supply of blood. These preparations are necessary in case the egg cell is fertilized, for then it must attach itself to the lining of the uterus to receive nourishment while it grows into a baby.

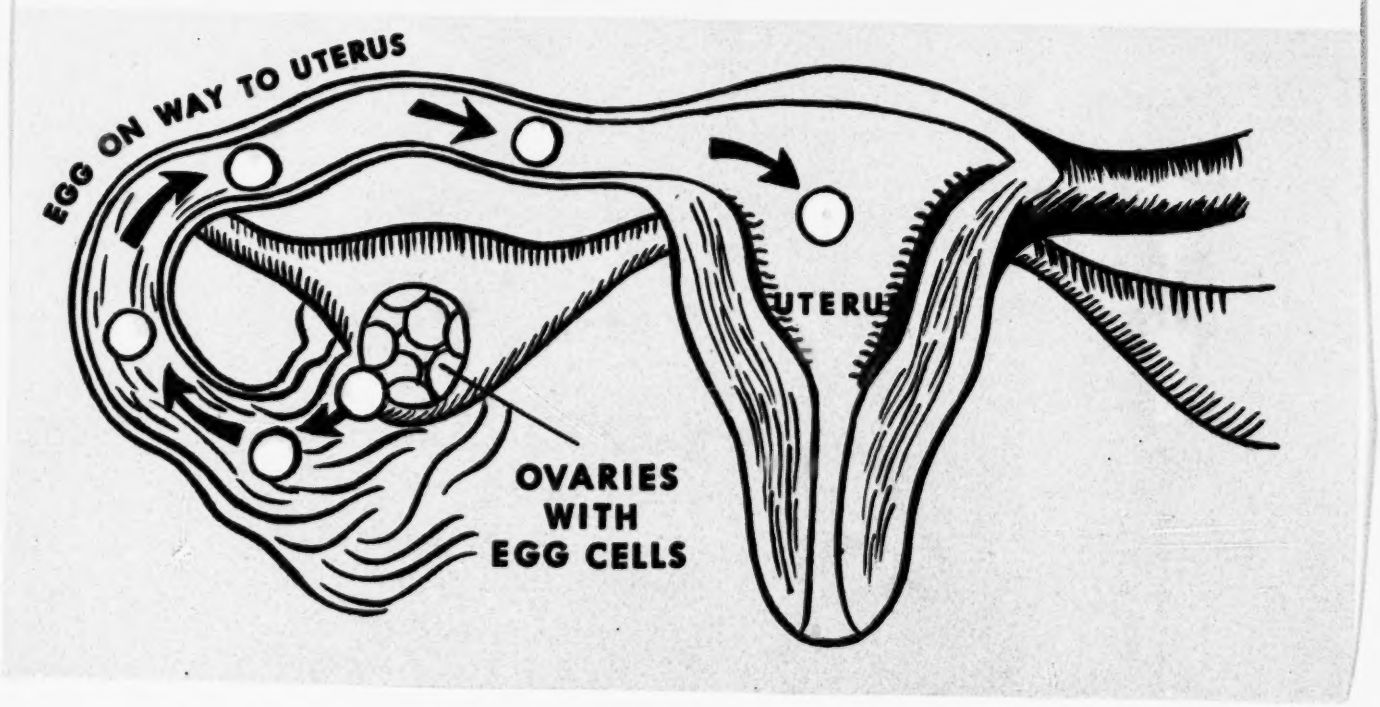
Most of the three or four hundred egg cells which leave the ovaries during a woman's life are not fertilized, and in that case they go to pieces and disappear. Then the corpus luteum shrinks and stops making its hormone. As a result, a part of the thickened lining of the uterus comes away and, along with the extra blood, passes out of the body through the vagina.

Menstruation Begins

This discharge is called *menstruation* (mĕn strōō ā′ shun). It usually occurs about two weeks after an egg cell leaves its follicle, and it lasts three to five days, possibly a day or so more or less.

After menstruation another egg cell ripens in another follicle, and is released in about two weeks. The whole series of events is called the menstrual cycle, or the reproductive cycle. Menstruation usually takes place about every twenty-eight or thirty days, but the cycle may be a few days longer, or shorter. Some girls speak of menstruation as their "period" because it comes at rather regular periods of time.

Menstruation, like ovulation, takes place approximately every



month as a rule until a woman is about forty-five or older, and her ovaries no longer release egg cells.

Most girls menstruate for the first time at about twelve or thirteen, although some girls begin at nine, ten, or eleven and others not until fifteen or sixteen. A girl who has not menstruated by that age should consult her physician.

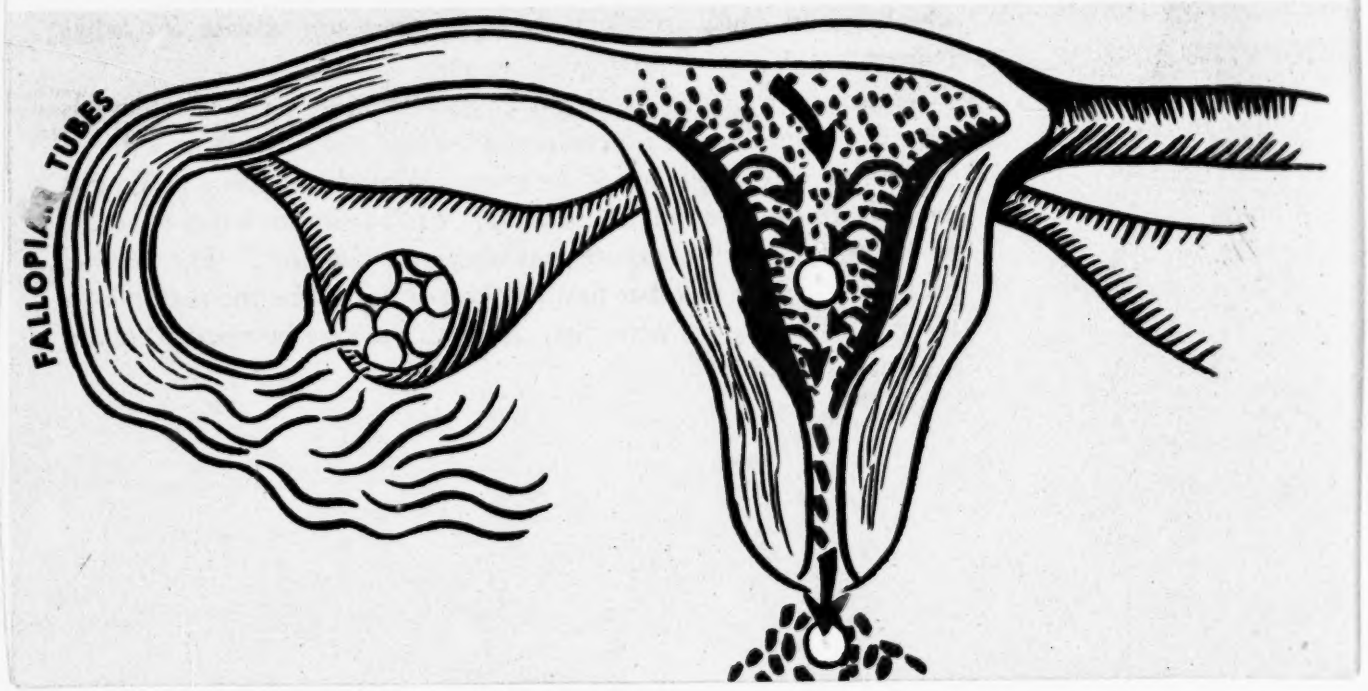
The first menstruation is usually considered a sign that a girl has reached puberty and could soon bear a baby. It is possible, however, that mature egg cells are not produced regularly in some girls for a year or so after they have begun to menstruate. Your common sense tells you, of course, that girls in the younger teens in our civilization are not really prepared to be mothers, for they still have much to learn. Then, too, they are likely to have better health if they bear babies when they are older.

Menstruation is likely to be rather irregular at first and a girl in her earlier teens may skip a month, or several months, or menstruate a few days late or early. However, the menstrual cycle usually settles down to fair regularity by the later teens, making it possible for a girl to keep track of the approximate dates when she may expect it.

"Feeling Fine, Thank You!"

Menstruation is a normal process and many girls feel entirely well during this period. Others have a few mild cramps or aching in the lower back, especially on the first day. Menstruation is not a sickness, and as a rule, girls can carry on most of their usual activities. If a girl has severe pain she should consult her physician, who may correct the trouble.

It's common sense to keep from getting overtired or chilled, and



to avoid the most strenuous types of exercise, at least during the early part of the period. Many girls take it easy during the first day, but do not need to restrict their activities the rest of the time. For example, some girls can swim comfortably all during the menstrual period. This is not advisable, however, unless the water is warm enough so that the girl is not chilled and she swims in moderation, avoiding violent exertion. Some girls find it better not to swim during the first day or two of the period or when the flow is heavy. Others are better off if they wait until the flow has stopped. Your own experience will be a guide as to what is best for you. You probably would not want to swim in an indoor pool during your period, out of consideration for other people. Practically every girl will find that a daily sponge bath or shower helps her to feel fresh and clean, and prevents body odors.

Constipation may cause discomfort during menstruation, since the fullness of the lower bowel adds to the feeling of congestion. Regular bowel habits and a diet that includes plenty of fluids—water, milk, fruit juices—with salads, fruits and vegetables may help to correct the constipation. Heavy rich foods, such as pies, cakes and sundaes should be omitted.

To protect clothing during menstruation, girls can buy comfortable sanitary pads or napkins, in different sizes and thickness to suit their own needs. Sanitary belts, often made of elastic, are used to hold the pads in place. The fasteners should hold firmly and not break easily.

Some girls use tampons, instead of sanitary napkins. Tampons are tight little rolls of absorbent material which may be inserted in the vagina and worn without a sanitary belt. They may not absorb as much of the menstrual flow as sanitary napkins, so that if the flow is heavy the pad may be needed too. Tampons should be changed at least as often as the pads or napkins. A girl should consult her family physician before using tampons to be sure that there is no condition which would cause irritation or make their use unwise for other reasons.

Sometimes a boy invites a girl to go swimming or on a strenuous hike, for example, and is bewildered because the girl refuses without explaining why. Both would be spared misunderstanding if the girl could learn to say simply, "I'm sorry; I can't swim for a day or two"; or "I can't do anything quite that strenuous just now." The boy, on his part, should remember that menstruation may be the reason why the girl is limiting her activities, although she may be reserved about making explanations.

Chapter 4

STEPS TOWARD MANHOOD

Boys are likely to reach puberty about a year later than girls of their own age. Perhaps this explains why boys in their younger teens are often slower than girls to be interested in dating and in boy-girl social events. Even so, boys become sexually mature some years before they are considered old enough to marry in our civilization.

When a baby boy is born, his sex organs are already formed, the principal ones being the two testes and the *penis* (pē′ nĭs). The testes are the male sex glands, and they make a hormone which causes the changes in a boy's voice and the growth of hair on his face and body. The testes also produce the sperm cells.

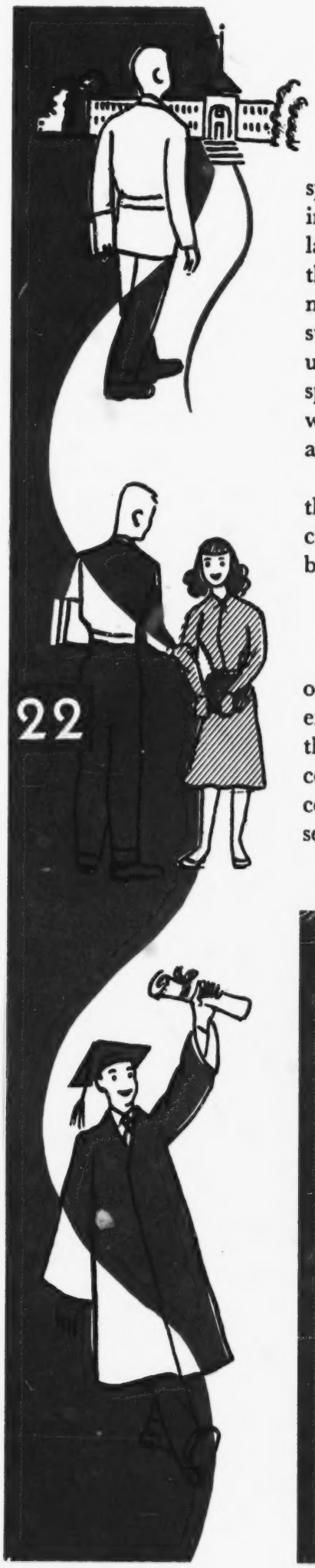
One of the early signs of adolescence in a boy is growth in the size of the testes and the penis. When this period of growth brings the sex organs to maturity, the testes begin to produce sperm cells. The formation of sperm cells then may continue well into old age, so that some men become fathers at sixty, seventy, or older.

The Complex Path of the Sperm Cell

The male sex organs make complex and delicately adjusted provisions for the growth, storage, and discharge of the sperm cells. As the two testes hang in the scrotum, each is about the size of a plum. They are filled with hundreds of fine, thread-like tubes, tightly coiled, in which the sperm cells grow.

Sperm cells are also called *spermatozoa* (spûr′ mȧ tŏ zō′ ȧ). They are much smaller than the egg cells, so small that there may be from four to five hundred millions of them in a teaspoonful of the fluid in which they leave the body. When seen under a powerful microscope, a sperm cell looks something like a tadpole, with a larger head at one end and an active tail.

The penis hangs in front of the testes. It is shaped something like a thumb, but is usually larger, although it varies in size. A tube, known as the *urethra* (ů rē′ thrȧ) runs through the length of the penis. It is the passage through which the sperm cells find their way outside the body and it is also the outlet for urine from the bladder. Sperm cells and urine do not normally pass through the urethra at the same time, since the opening from the bladder into the urethra closes when sperm cells are discharged.



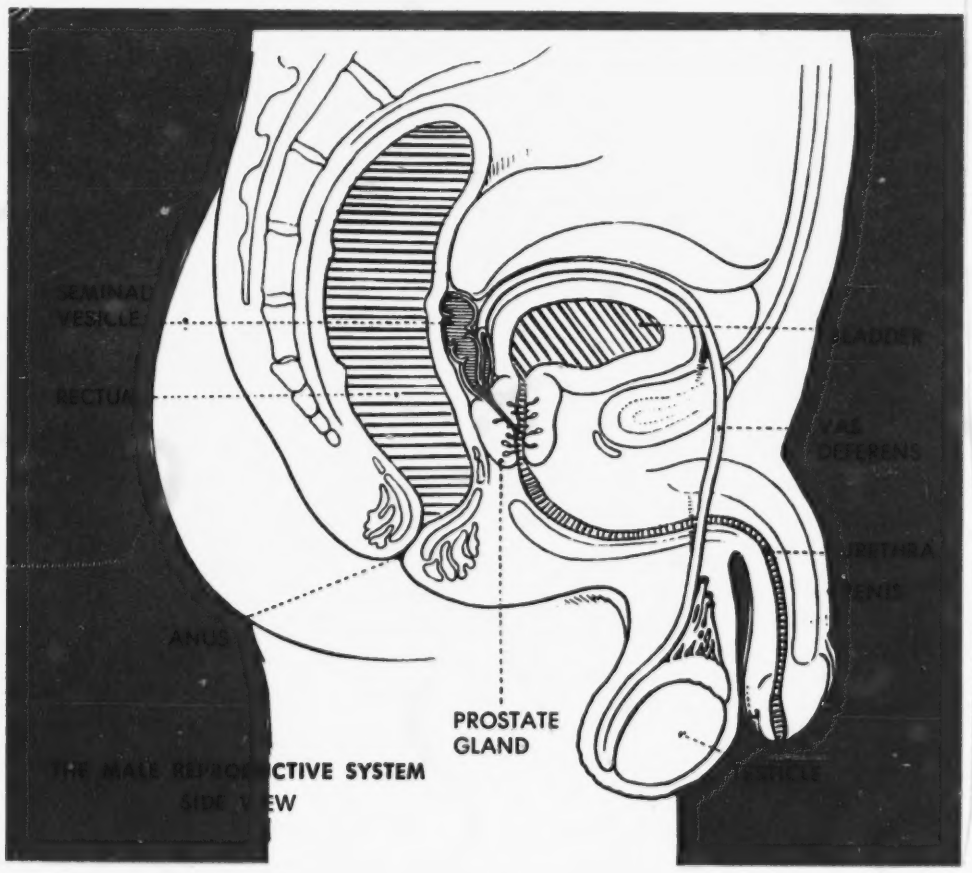
The sperm cells reach the urethra in a complex journey. The sperm cells grow in the hundreds of very small, coiled tubes that are in each testis. All of these small tubes in one testis open into one larger tube, through which the sperm cells leave the testis. Behind the testis, in the scrotum, this larger tube forms a mass of coils which may serve as a temporary storage space for sperm cells. Then it straightens out and rises into the groin and finally opens into the urethra. Along the way, the tube is connected with a storage sac for sperm cells and with glands which help to produce a whitish fluid in which the sperm cells are discharged from the body. The sperm cells and this fluid together are called *semen* (sē′ mĕn).

The end of the penis at birth is partly covered by loose skin which the doctor sometimes cuts away in a minor operation known as circumcision. A boy who has not been circumsized needs to turn back the loose skin when bathing, so as to keep the membranes clean.

A Step Toward Maturity

Although usually limp and soft, the penis, under sexual excitement of mind or body, fills with blood so that it becomes firm, and an erection occurs. In a boy whose sex organs have matured, semen may then spurt out of the erect penis as a result of the contraction of certain tissues. This is called an ejaculation. The penis then becomes limp again. Erection and ejaculation are accompanied by sensations in the sex organs that are intensely pleasureable.

Most boys experience their first ejaculation at about fourteen, but



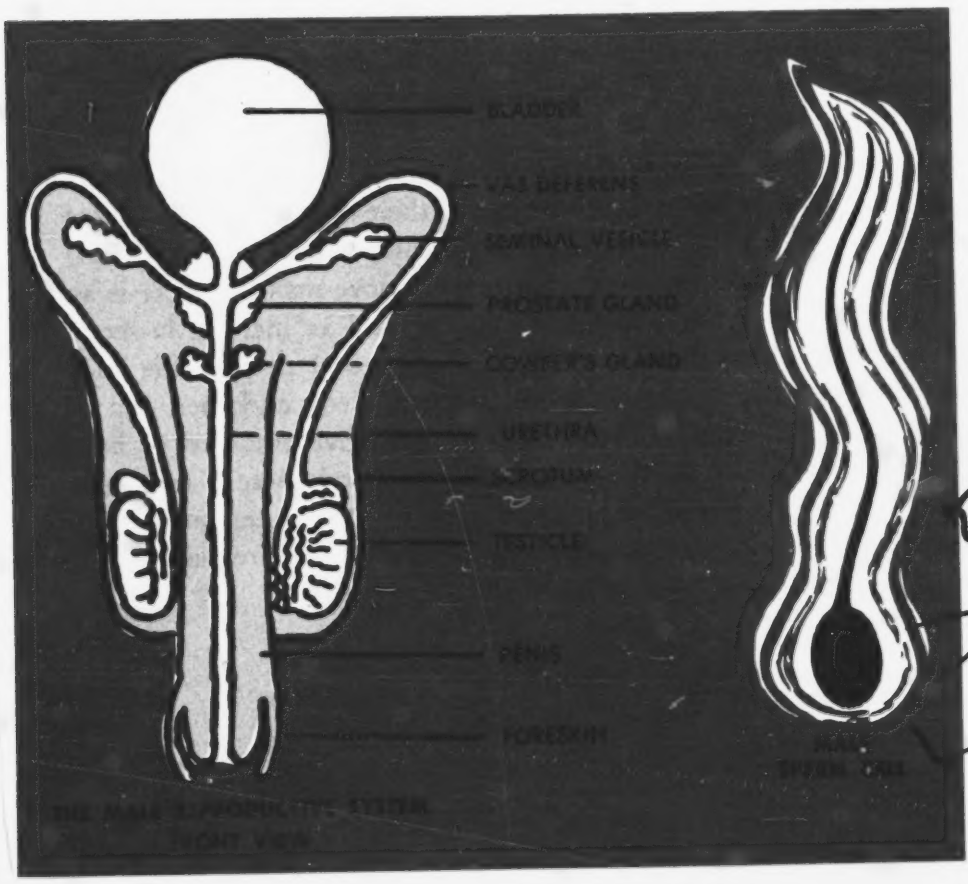
THE MALE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM
SIDE VIEW

it may occur a year or two earlier or later. From then on, a boy is likely to experience erection and ejaculation in a variety of situations. The cause may be mainly physical, as when a boy is climbing a tree, or when the bladder is full. Or ejaculation may occur when a boy is reading or daydreaming about sex, or watching an exciting movie, or when he is very much stirred by a girl. Sometimes there seems to be no special reason.

Some boys worry when they wake in the morning to find that they have had an ejaculation during the night. Such occurrences are normal, however, and are called "seminal emissions," or "nocturnal emissions," or "wet dreams." Normal boys differ widely in the frequency of such emissions, and some boys do not have them. Although they are not abnormal, if emissions take place several times or more a week, there may be too much sexual stimulation in a boy's life and not enough of the normal physical activities and mental interests that boys need.

Most girls in their younger teens experience sexual feelings much less frequently than boys, perhaps not at all, and so girls generally do not realize how often boys may have them.

In one sense, a boy is sexually mature when his testicles are producing sperm cells and he is physically able to become the parent of a child. Yet you know that this is only one step on the way to full maturity, for the boy needs to develop in other important ways before he is ready to take on the responsibilities of a husband and father, in supporting and otherwise caring for his family.



Chapter 5

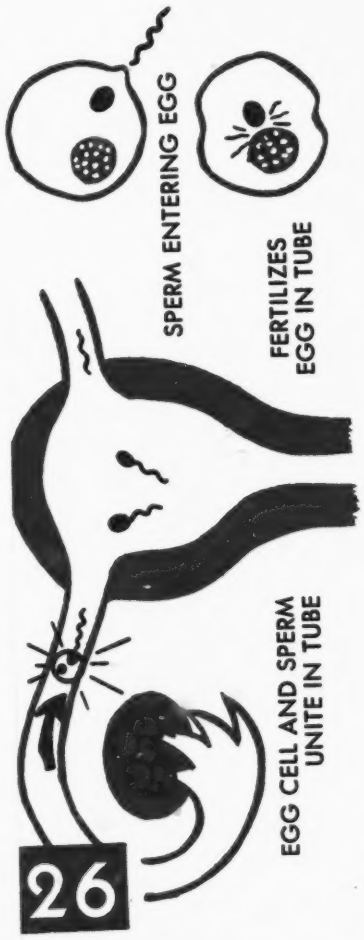
LOOKING TOWARD PARENTHOOD

As a young teen-ager, you may have reached puberty, but you probably will wait five, ten, or more years before you marry and have children. You won't wait that long, however, before you want friends of the other sex, and begin to dream of love and marriage. Knowledge of the story of life and birth may help you to keep your feet on the ground in your friendships and in your dreams and plans.

Something so important as the continuation of the human race could scarcely be left to chance, and so a capacity for feeling sexual attraction seems to be "built in" to the nature of human beings, so that men and women want to marry and have children. Sex attraction is a wonderful and important part of genuine love. When you observe a happily married couple, however, you soon see that they are attracted by the personality of the one they love. You know yourself how important the traits of personality are to you in your own choice of friends of either sex.

A happy married couple love many different qualities in each other, and they also show their love in many different ways. For example, a husband does his best in his job because he wants his wife to be proud of him and he wants to provide for her security. A wife goes to a great deal of trouble to create a comfortable, happy home and to give her husband pleasure in innumerable ways, such as preparing meals that he likes, or finding exactly the right gift for his birthday.

It is normal and right for husband and wife to find pleasure in kissing and caressing each other and for their caresses to be followed by their desire to come together in a close, loving embrace called mating, or sexual intercourse. During the love-making, there is an increased flow of blood to the sex organs, and an increase in secretions that moisten them, and other changes that prepare the body for mating. The husband's penis becomes erect, and then can fit into the wife's vagina. This embrace can give pleasure to both husband and wife. At the climax of intercourse there is an ejaculation of semen from the husband's penis. After intercourse, both husband and wife feel deeply happy and peacefully relaxed.



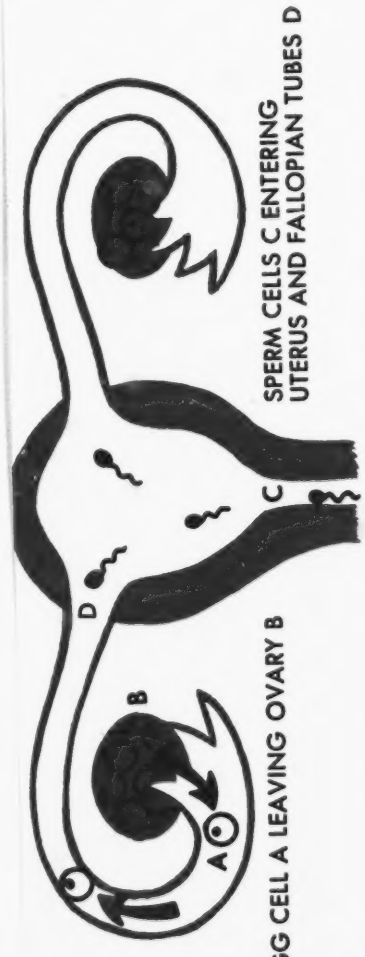
When the Sperm Cell Finds an Egg Cell

When sperm cells are released into the vagina, they swim along into the uterus and then into the tubes. If there is an egg cell in one of the tubes, a sperm cell may unite with it to make a fertilized egg cell. Only one sperm cell unites with an egg cell in producing the fertilized egg.

An egg cell is present in one of the tubes for only a part of the month, but no girl or woman knows exactly when this is. The sperm cells do not find an egg cell every time mating occurs.

A fertilized egg cell travels from the tube into the uterus, and nestles down in the wall of the uterus, which is ready with extra lining and blood supply. Since the extra blood now will be needed to nourish the growing baby, menstruation does not occur. The mother then realizes that she may be pregnant.

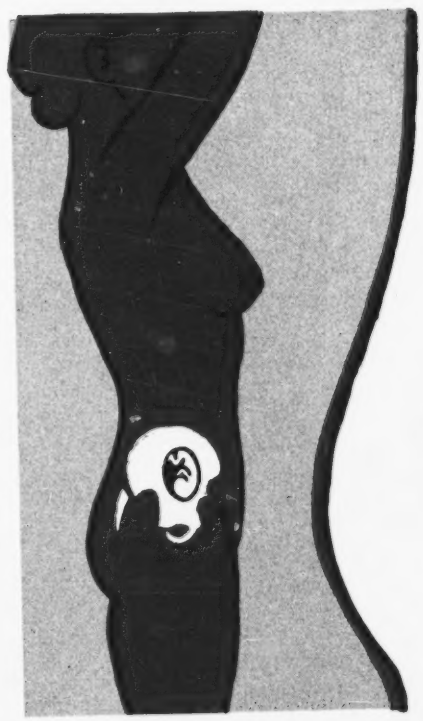
Since a menstrual period may be skipped sometimes for other reasons, a woman who thinks she is pregnant usually consults her physician, who can perform certain tests to make sure. If she is pregnant, she can expect that ovulation and menstruation will not occur during her pregnancy. The corpus luteum remains active, and through its hormone helps to keep conditions in the uterus right for the growing baby.



How the Unborn Baby Grows

To begin with, the fertilized egg cell is one rather large cell. Soon it divides into two cells and each cell divides again and again. The cells keep on dividing until after a time they begin to form the various parts of the body, such as heart and blood vessels, stomach, lungs, skin and nerves.

At first the unborn child does not look much like a baby, but in about three months, the main parts of the body have appeared. At five or six months he looks rather as he will at birth, except that he is only about a foot long and is very lean. In the last two or three months before birth he grows



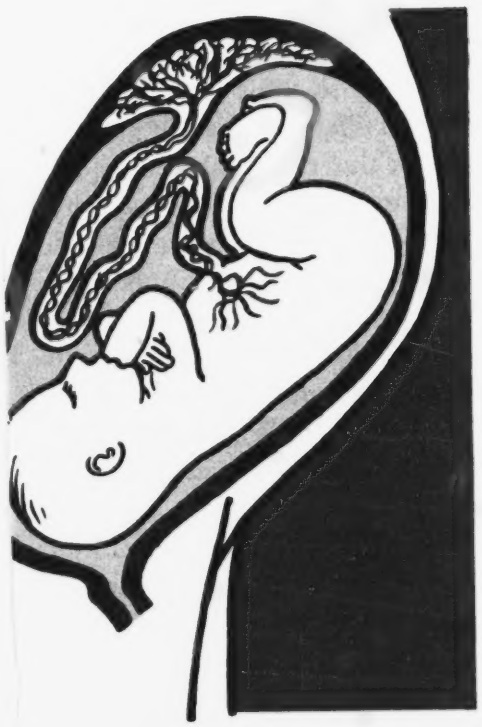
longer and plumper and his internal organs develop enough so that he will be able to live in the outside world. At birth, the baby is usually about twenty inches long and about seven pounds or so in weight.

When a mother finds out that she is pregnant, she knows that in approximately nine months from her last period she will have the baby. However, some babies are born after only seven or eight months of development. Such babies are premature babies. With special care, they usually survive. Then they live to be as strong and healthy as other babies. Hospitals care for them in a special type of incubator, which provides an even temperature like that in the mother's body.

During pregnancy the mother's uterus stretches as fast as the baby grows so that there is always room for him. In the last few months, the mother's body is conspicuously bigger.

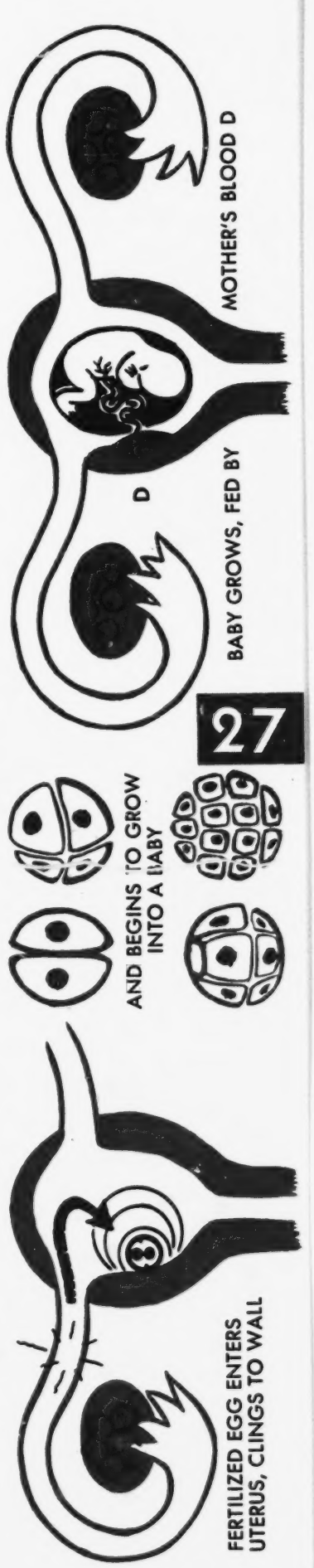
Soon after the fertilized egg attaches itself to the lining of the uterus, a sac grows around it which fills with a fluid. The baby floats in the fluid until birth and thus is protected from being jolted.

The baby can live in the fluid because he does not need to use his nose or mouth before birth, as he receives food and oxygen by certain special arrangements. Early in his development, a cord containing some of the baby's blood vessels attaches the baby to the lining of the uterus. It is attached to the baby's own body at his abdomen, where his navel will appear after his birth.



Where the cord is attached to the lining of the uterus, there is a special network of blood vessels called the *placenta* (plà sĕn′ tà). In the placenta, the blood vessels of the mother and the baby mingle closely, but the mother's blood vessels do not open into the baby's, and her own blood does not flow into his blood vessels.

Instead, food materials and oxygen from the mother's blood filter from her blood vessels into the baby's blood vessels and are carried throughout his



body in his blood stream for the cells to use as they grow. The waste materials that are left over are carried back to the placenta in the baby's blood stream. There they filter out into the mother's blood vessels and her body gets rid of them. In this remarkable way, the mother eats, breathes, and gets rid of waste materials for the unborn baby. When he is born, he must be able to do those things for himself.

During pregnancy, the mother's breasts prepare to supply milk for the baby. They become larger and firmer and the area around the nipples grows darker. Physicians usually advise a mother to breast-feed her baby, if possible, for a mother's milk is the best food for babies. Some mothers do not have enough milk and must prepare a special formula to feed the baby from a bottle at least part of the time.

Nowadays, most women consult their physician regularly during pregnancy, so that he may give advice about what to eat for the mother's sake and the baby's and regular examinations to make sure that all is well.

Helping the Baby to be Born

At the end of the pregnancy, the mother's body also helps the baby to be born. The muscles of the uterus then stop stretching and begin to contract and to push the baby into the vagina. These contractions give the mother notice that birth is near, as they come with increasing frequency. They feel something like menstrual cramps, or the pain of a stomach ache. They are called "labor," and it is a good name for them, for it really is work for the mother to help in the baby's birth.

When labor begins, the mother knows that it is time to go to the hospital or to ask the doctor to come to her home to assist in the birth. Most parents nowadays prefer to have their baby born in a hospital, since doctors and nurses there have everything at hand to give the best care.

By the last few weeks of pregnancy, the baby usually has taken a position head down in the uterus, so that his head is the first part to be pushed into the vagina. The opening of the uterus into the vagina stretches wide and the vagina also stretches tremendously, making room for the passage of the baby. The sac of fluid around the baby usually bursts after labor begins.

Finally, the baby comes out into the world. When he first appears, his cord is still attached to his navel and to his mother's placenta. The doctor ties the cord and cuts it a short distance from the baby's body. Soon the bit of cord that is left will dry up, and the place where it was attached will appear as the baby's navel. Neither mother nor baby feel any pain when the cord is cut, because it contains no nerves. Not long after the baby appears, muscular contractions of the uterus force out the placenta and the rest of the cord, which is about two feet long. This is called the afterbirth.

The doctor and nurse are glad to hear the baby cry just after he is born, for they know then that he has begun to breathe with his own lungs. This really is a remarkable change, for it means that suddenly the baby's body has begun to use oxygen taken in through his own lungs instead of from its previous source, his mother's blood stream.

After the baby's birth, the uterus and other parts of the mother's body return to much the same size as before the pregnancy, except that the birth passages remain somewhat larger. Many mothers are able to supply milk from their own breasts for as long as the baby needs it. When the mother stops nursing the baby, her breasts gradually will stop producing milk. The baby is said to be "weaned" from the breast when he is no longer nursed at the breast.

The Baby's Heredity

If you are a boy, you may wonder at this point how important the father is as a parent. Through the sperm cell and the egg cell both father and mother pass on to the baby the family traits that are the child's heredity. To understand this, you need to know a little about cells.

If you look at cells through a microscope, you can see that there is a special part in each cell which is the *nucleus* (nū′ klē ŭs). Inside the nucleus, there are the *chromosomes* (krō′ mō sōms), which are small, thread-like objects of different shapes. The chromosomes, in turn, have many extremely small parts called *genes* (jēns). Scientists believe that the genes carry the traits which a child inherits from his ancestors.

When the sperm cell and the egg cell unite the twenty-three chromosomes of each nucleus go into the nucleus of the new fertilized egg cell, giving it forty-six chromosomes. All the cells that grow from the fertilized egg cell to make a human being's body, all during his life, will have forty-six chromosomes, except mature egg cells or sperm cells, which will have twenty-three.

Through the union of the sperm cell and the egg cell, the father and mother each contribute twenty-three chromosomes to the child, so that his heredity combines traits from both sides of the family. Because the child's parents received their chromosomes from the grandparents, who in turn received their chromosomes from *their*

parents, and so on, each child receives a mixture from many different ancestors.

Each child is different because there is an entirely new combination of chromosomes with their genes each time an egg cell and a sperm cell unite. True, there often are strong family resemblances between brothers and sisters, but it is not surprising, either, if a child looks little like anyone else in the family.

The situation is made more complicated because some traits carried by the genes are stronger than others, and are more likely to win out. For example, genes for brown eyes are stronger than those for blue eyes.

There are exceptions to the rule that no two babies are born with exactly the same combination of chromosomes and genes. Occasionally, one fertilized egg cell grows into two or more babies, instead of one. If there are two babies, they are "identical twins," or "like twins." They are always of the same sex, and it is very hard to tell them apart.

Sometimes a mother produces more than one egg cell at a time and if more than one is then fertilized, more than one baby may grow. Since such babies grow from different egg cells and sperm cells they may be as different in looks and inheritance as any other brothers or sisters. Such children are called "unlike twins," or "fraternal twins." They need not be of the same sex.

Some babies turn out to be boys and some to be girls because there are two kinds of sperm cells. If the sperm cell has one kind of chromosome, called the Y chromosome, the baby will be a boy. If the sperm cell has the other kind, called the X chromosome, the baby will be a girl. There are about equal numbers of each kind, so the chances are about 50-50 which sex the baby will be. Nevertheless, statistics through many years show that for every 103 boy babies born, there are but 100 girl babies. This is a puzzling mystery.

Nothing is known that can be done to influence the sex of an unborn baby, since sex is determined at the moment the sperm cell unites with the egg cell.

Parents Influence the Child's Personality

Besides passing on to the child the family traits he inherits, parents begin to shape the baby's personality in a different way after his birth. Their love and care for the baby as he grows into childhood and youth is most important in determining the kind of person he will be.

Chapter 6

BOY-GIRL FRIENDSHIPS

Just now, you are probably more interested in questions about your friendships with the other sex than in future parenthood. When should boys and girls begin dating? What about going steady? What are good ways of showing friendship or affection for someone

of the opposite sex? Is something wrong with you if you don't have dates in the first half of the teens? How can you make more friends of the other sex? How can you know what is right and wrong in sex conduct. For example, what about petting? How old do you have to be before you can really fall in love?

Definite rules and straight "yes" or "no" answers are not as useful to you as knowledge of certain facts and principles that help you to find your own answers, and to understand why some actions are considered right, or wrong.

Sue and Louise

When Sue and Louise were in the seventh grade, they were always together, walking to school, eating lunch, joining the same hobby group. They were in the eighth grade when, one Friday, Jim wanted to walk home with Louise. She asked Sue to come with them, but Sue ran on ahead to hide her hurt feelings. At home, she sobbed to her mother, "Louise doesn't want to be my best girl-friend any more! She walked home with that old Jim!"

Sue's wise mother helped her to realize that to keep a friendship, she

must leave her friends free to have other friends, too, if they wished. She also pointed out that it is natural for a girl in her teens to begin to be interested in boys. In another year, Sue found this out herself.

Perhaps you know a group of friends that is changing because some of its members are interested in the other sex, and some are not. If you are in such a group, you might think twice before letting friendships break up for no other reason. You may have a friend who is shy, and just needs a little help in feeling at ease with the other sex.

Ben and Art

Two ninth-grade boys, Ben and Art, were sitting in Ben's kitchen trying to decide what girls to ask to the movies on Saturday. Ben suggested Lily, but Art didn't like her girl friend. Art suggested Florence and Grace, but Ben thought they were too tall. Before the boys knew it, the evening was gone, and so were a quart of milk and two dozen cookies! They never did ask the girls. You yourself may know teen-age boys or girls who have fun talking about dates and dating, without having many dates themselves.

Marie and her Friends

Marie and half a dozen girl friends were annoyed. The ninth-grade dance had been called off because not even half of the boys would sign up to ask a girl to go. "You can give a party here for seven or eight couples," Marie's mother suggested. "Marie can send invitations, and the boys will probably all come if they don't have to ask a particular girl."

Marie's mother was right; all the boys came. Boys in their younger teens often are glad to be asked to a party, or to go stag to a school party, before they feel ready to ask for a date. Eighth and ninth grade girls are usually more interested in parties, dancing and dating than the boys in those grades. However, there are plenty of events, such as hikes, picnics, or swimming parties, where a crowd of boys and girls can have fun without insisting that the boys ask for dates. Do you think there are enough such opportunities in your school or community? If not, perhaps your class at school could talk with your teacher about how to provide such opportunities.

A Famous Story

Occasionally a boy or girl in the younger teens thinks that he has fallen in love with some older person, who becomes a romantic ideal. Did you ever feel that way about an older person, a teacher or a club leader, perhaps? In *The Story of a Bad Boy,** Thomas Bailey Aldrich tells of falling in love, when he was fourteen, with beautiful Miss Nelly Glentworth, who was nineteen.

"I was wretched away from her, and only less wretched in her presence. The especial cause of my woe was this: I was simply a little boy to Miss Glentworth . . . When I lay on the sofa, my head

From: *The Story of A Bad Boy,* by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Grosset & Dunlap, Inc., New York.

aching with love and mortification, would she have stooped down and kissed me if I hadn't been a little boy? How I despised little boys!"

Such an experience is nothing to be ashamed of. "I am not going to deny my boyish regard for her nor laugh at it," wrote Mr. Aldrich. "As long as it lasted, it was a very sincere and unselfish love . . . I say as long as it lasted, for one's first love doesn't last forever."

Friendship or Love?

On the other hand, a boy and a girl in the younger teens sometimes do experience feelings of deep friendship and affection which may ripen into adult love and marriage. It is true, however, that such youthful feelings often change, though young friends find it hard to believe that they can.

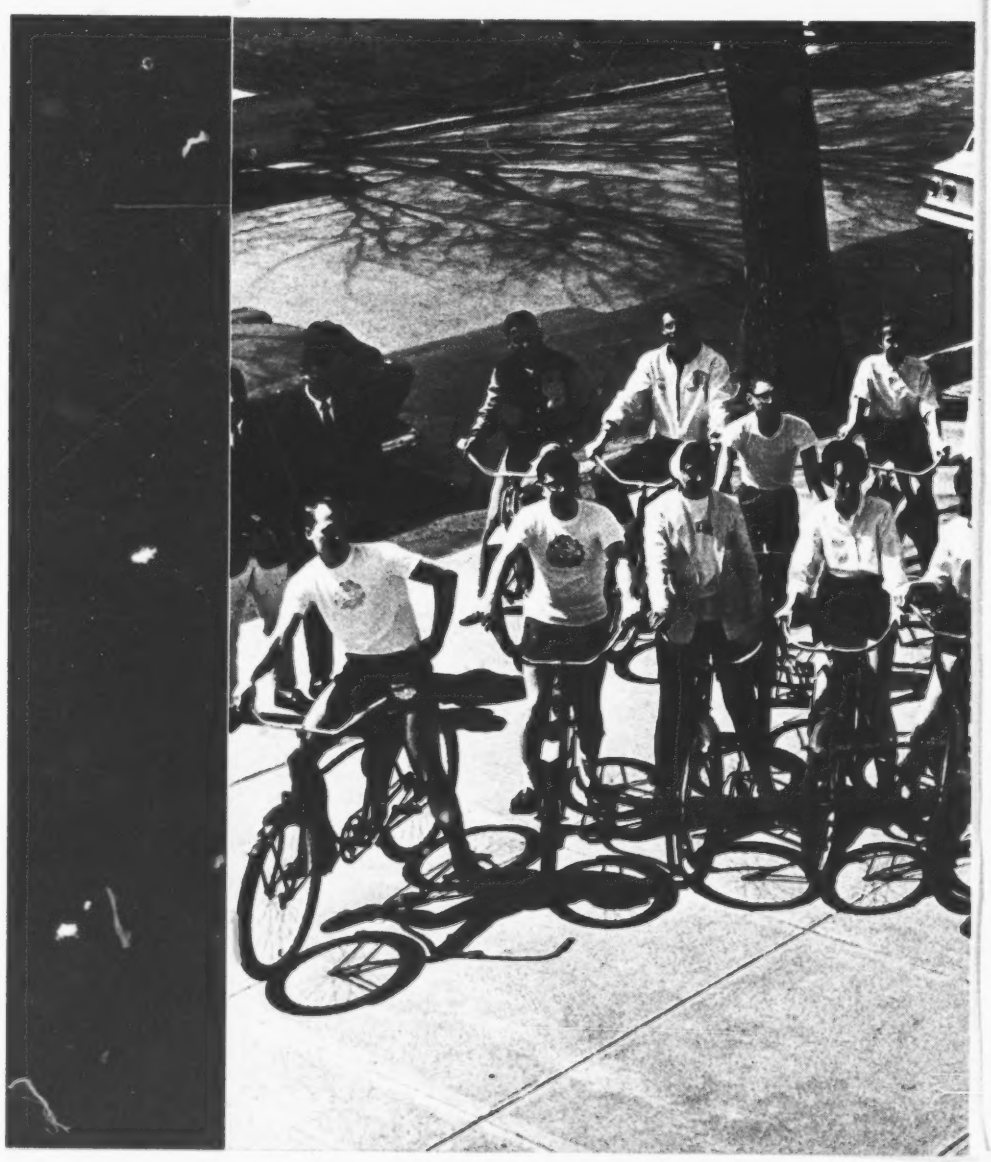
Your personality develops quite rapidly in your earlier teens, and your interests may shift rather often. This is a reason why your feelings about individuals may change, too. It is quite usual for

young people in their teens to become fond of several persons before they fall in love with the one whom they later marry. The boy or girl in the earlier teens who thinks he is in love need not be surprised if his own feelings do not last, or if the feelings of the other person change quickly.

Your Capacity for Friendship Grows

You grow in friendship in one way by learning to be on friendly terms with a widening circle of people. A friendly attitude, with a smile and a cheerful hello, even for people whom you know only slightly, is likely to open up happy new friendships with either sex. On the other hand, exclusiveness and indifference usually stop the widening of friendships.

Increased pleasure in giving, with clearer understanding of how to give happiness to your friends, is another sign of growth in friendship. Compare, for example, a small child's reluctance to give his



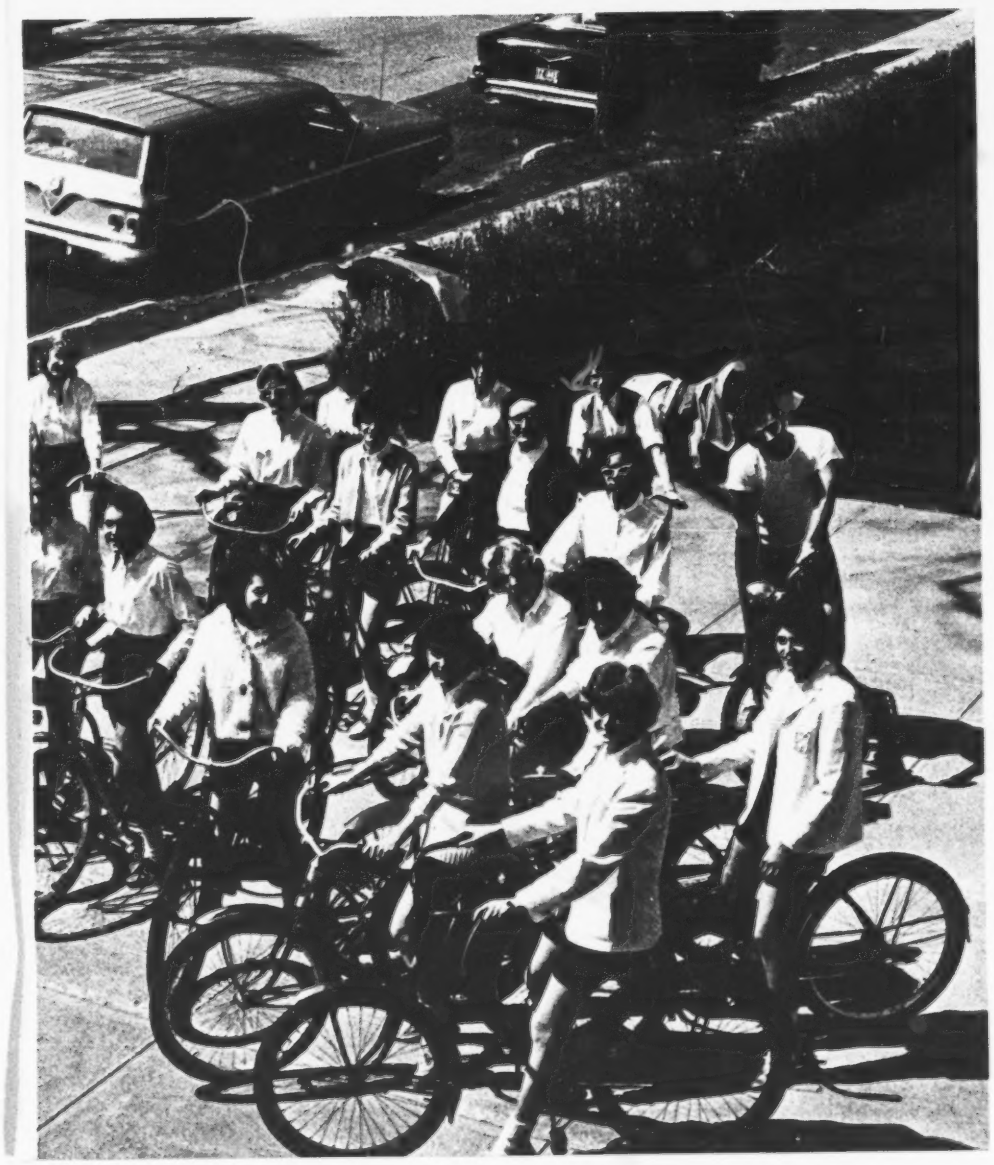
toy to a playmate with Larry's generosity to Helen. When he and Helen were tied for first place to represent their high school in a state-wide spelling contest, he asked to have his name withdrawn in Helen's favor. He explained to his parents that because Helen was a girl, she might have fewer chances of that sort than a boy. "I feel better because I did it," he said.

You may not agree that girls have fewer opportunities than boys, but Larry surely had learned to give thoughtful consideration to a friend's happiness.

Making More Friends of the Other Sex

Bill wakes up in the morning with that good feeling that something wonderful is going to happen—and remembers he is going to the picnic with Marie. Helen hums a song while she straightens her room—John has asked her to the class party.

A friendship with the other sex and one with the same sex are



alike in some respects. In both cases, a satisfactory friendship grows out of your liking and respect for your friend's personality, and out of the interests which you share. The chief difference is that in a friendship with the other sex, there may also be a sexual attraction between you. However, when a friendship is based *only* on the physical attraction of sex, it is unlikely to be satisfying, for the relationship is often a selfish one.

If you feel that you have too few friends of the other sex, you might try checking yourself on the principles mentioned in the preceding section—a growing, sincere interest in others, and a growing understanding of how to give happiness to your friends. These principles are as old as the golden rule.

You'll find new values, however, if you try applying them, even to such a simple thing as your conversation. Do you *really* listen? Do you hear not only what your friend says, but what he doesn't say, because you are aware of expressions and attitudes that show his inner feelings? Or do you merely wait for your turn to talk?

As you look through lists of "What Girls Like in Boys," or "What Boys Like in Girls," you will find in both lists such words as friendly, courteous, considerate, sincere, is a good sport—words that really describe friendly thoughtfulness of others. Many other traits are listed, too, such as "sense of humor," "good manners," "good grooming," or "interesting to talk to," but they usually add up to someone who is courteous, friendly and good fun.

You may have too few friends because you limit yourself unnecessarily. If you're a boy, do you hang back because the most popular girls are dated up, and you won't ask the others? Or if you're a girl, do you discourage a boy just because he's shorter than you, or not a smooth talker? If you do not limit your adventures in friendship in that way, you'll find out that there are many boys and girls who make wonderful friends, even if they are not conspicuous for good looks or popularity.

Or perhaps you are not using all your assets. Probably you have some special talent—a willingness to be useful, a cheerful manner, or skill in sports or a hobby—that will make you welcome in some group of young people, at school, or church, or the Y. Possibly you have not made enough friends merely because you do not take part in activities where you have a chance to get acquainted.

When Should Dating Begin?

As you know, young people grow physically at different rates,

some faster, some slower. Somewhat the same thing is true of growth in boy-girl friendships. Some young people date early; others who are just as normal do not begin until college age. Some do not settle down to any particular friend in the early teens; some "go steady" with a succession of friends. A few, even during those early years, care for each other deeply, and later marry.

On entering the teens, many boys and girls are devoted to a friend of the same sex, as Sue and Louise were. It is natural for one's interest in friends to widen out, to make room for friendships with the other sex, although girls will still enjoy their girlfriends, and boys still want to do things with boys.

Occasionally two friends of the same sex develop such an intense friendship that for a long period they do not want to spend time with any other young people. Fortunately, young people usually are able to outgrow an intense, same-sex friendship of this nature. Now and then, however, an exclusive interest in the same sex will prevent a young person from being able to experience love with the opposite sex, and from being able to make a happy marriage.

If such a relationship should begin to develop in your life, you would be wise to make an effort to form some new friendships, and to seek the help of some older person whom you trust. It is the ideal thing to be able to talk with one of your parents. However, if you feel you cannot talk with them, you might talk with your family physician; or with your minister, priest, or rabbi; perhaps your leader in Scouting, or in a youth organization; or with a teacher in your school who knows how to advise young people about their problems.

When teen-agers begin to be interested in the other sex, they often go through some preliminary stages before they start regular dating. Perhaps they just talk about dating, as Ben and Art did. Or they may begin by going to school clubs, or other school affairs where boys and girls do things together. Then there's the informal get-together, where boys and girls gather at someone's house, or go on a hike, or picnic, as a group. These might be called group dates. Either boys or girls, or both together, organize these events. Group dates are a very satisfactory form of dating, especially in the younger teens.

After some experience in group dating, two or three boys may feel that they know the girls well enough to ask for dates to a movie, or a school party, which the parents approve. Often two couples go together in a foursome and find this a satisfactory way of getting used to dating.

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Dating in twosomes is not likely to be as frequent or regular among young teen-agers as group dating, or foursomes, although community customs differ.

The age at which regular dating should begin really depends on what you and your friends have been doing already, as well as what your parents think about it, If a crowd has been dropping in at someone's home every Saturday night, it is quite natural for some of the boys to call for the girls, or take them home, and that might lead next to other kinds of dating.

What About Going Steady?

"Going steady" has different meanings in different communities. Sara Lee moved to a new city, and found that when she had walked home twice with the same boy, she was supposed to be "going steady." To her, the phrase meant being seriously interested in someone. She soon found that in the new school, "steadies" were supposed to go to school parties and walk home together, but that it was all right to change around rather often. This was a relief, because she did not want to be confined to one boy friend.

Some young people who are less at ease socially than Sara Lee go steady because then they can count on having dates and attending parties. This helps them to be comfortable socially. However, they run the risk of hurt feelings if one wants to quit going steady before the other friend does.

If going steady keeps your circle of friends very small, perhaps you should put a question mark beside the custom, while you think about it and discuss the matter with your parents. The happiest way to correct such a situation is not to drop old friends, but to add new ones, after you have talked the situation over with your steady, and to reach a friendly understanding. If going steady helps you to enlarge your circle of friends, it may be the right thing for you.

Some Problems

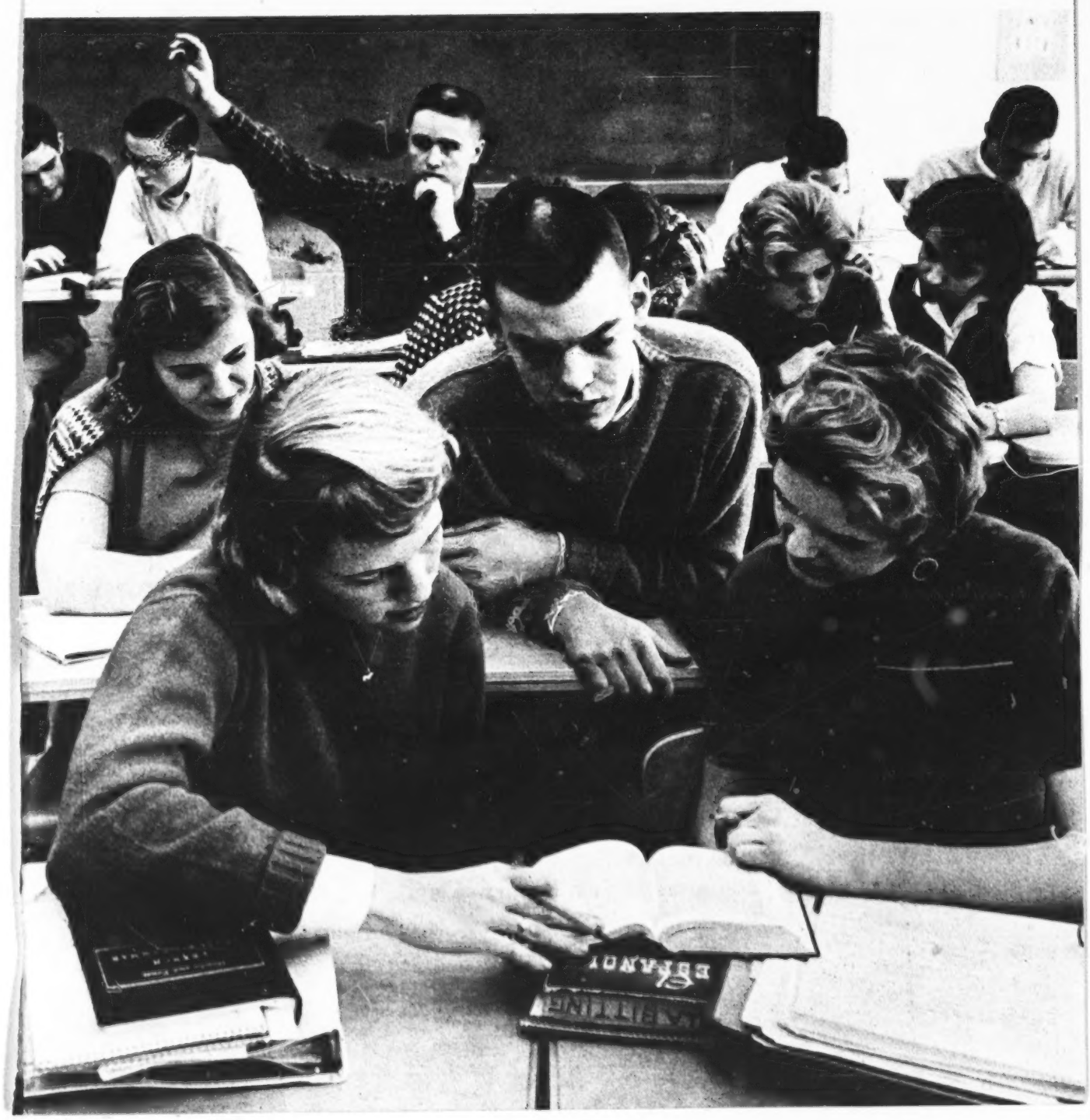
Teen-agers should be neither surprised nor ashamed if their attraction to someone of the other sex is accompanied by new physical urges. These new feelings usually appear during adolescence, along with the body changes which make a boy or girl sexually mature.

Some teen-agers may not know how to manage the new urges, since sexual feelings may be quite strong before a young man or woman is ready to marry. A few facts and suggestions may be helpful.

As was pointed out on page 23, boys and men may be sexually aroused by a good many different kinds of situations. Girls also experience sexual feelings, although as a rule fewer circumstances are sexually exciting to them.

Sex day-dreams, combined with the physical urges of sex, cause most boys and girls, at some time during their teens, to handle their external sex organs so as to cause an intense sensation, and in boys, sometimes an ejaculation. This is called masturbation, or self-excitement.

Young people often worry because they have heard that masturbation causes insanity, feeblemindedness, pimples, or other physical



ailments. Physicians believe today that masturbation does not cause any of these things. They point out that most young people get over the practice as they grow older. However, indulging in masturbation is likely to cause guilty feelings that may be very disturbing.

The indirect way of trying to fill your life with good friendships, good fun, and interesting, worthwhile activities is probably the best way to avoid such feelings of guilt. It may help also, if, instead of

dodging your problems, you try to face up to them and meet them without letting a lot of tension build up. If this matter is something that disturbs you, the ideal thing is to have a confidential talk with one of your parents. If you feel that you cannot discuss it with them, then talk it over with some other trusted older person.

On pages 38-39, there are some suggestions which, if followed, may support you in your intention and desire to live up to your ideals of good sex conduct, and to avoid actions that make you feel guilty and unhappy.

Other questions may come up when you are fond of someone of the other sex. You may wonder, then, whether you should show your affection in kissing or other caresses. It is natural for a boy and girl who like each other to want to show their friendship, perhaps by an arm around the shoulder, or holding hands, or a kiss. One guide which many young people accept is the idea that such gestures should be given only as a sign of sincere friendliness or affection.

Another guide takes account of physiology, as well as the welfare of both friends. If the light kiss, or cheek-to-cheek caress (called "necking" by many young people) becomes intense or prolonged, it is likely to lead to petting. Petting involves caresses of other parts of the body in a way that is sexually exciting. Then physical and emotional changes take place which in married couples would be followed by sexual intercourse. At that stage of feeling, it is likely to be difficult to stop short of mating, whether the couple is married or not. This is one reason why many young teen-age couples postpone serious love-making until they are nearer the age of marriage, and why petting just for the thrills is not a good basis for a friendship.

In one class studying about human reproduction, a student asked, "In primitive times, how did a male know when to start mating?" Among some primitive people, a male started mating as soon as his body was sexually mature, and certain tribal ceremonies had taken place, to show that he was considered a man.

Young people today do not usually marry until some years after their bodies are sexually mature, and so the situation is more complex. In the years before marriage, young teen-agers need to learn to have friendships with the other sex which are a source of mutual happiness and do not cause suffering and regrets.

A young couple who have sexual intercourse before marriage expose their love, and perhaps the girl's life, to many dangers. The risk that the girl may become pregnant should be a matter of as great concern to the boy as it is to the girl. Although the young

people may think they know how to prevent pregnancy, the information that they may pick up is apt to be incorrect, since the girl is not a married woman going to a doctor for professional advice. Then, too, unmarried people who have sexual relations are likely to act secretly and hurriedly, so that there is a great chance that the methods they use will not work.

If the girl becomes pregnant, the young couple may be forced to marry, whether or not they are really suited to each other. Such a marriage may cut short the boy's education and his chance for his chosen career, and it is likely to bring unhappiness to both the boy and the girl.

If the girl has the baby without being married, she faces many problems in making a home and caring for her child without a husband and father, and such a situation brings great suffering and heartache to the child, as well as to herself. In some cases, the girl goes to someone who performs an illegal *abortion* (ȧ bôr′ shŭn), an operation in which the unborn baby is taken from the uterus and dies. Not only does the unborn baby die, but the girl's own life is in danger, because such secret operations are so often performed carelessly, under unsanitary conditions. If the girl lives, she may not be able to have babies in the future as a result of the careless operation.

An unmarried girl who is pregnant should go at once to her own physician, or some other reliable doctor of good reputation. He can give her proper care during her pregnancy, and advise her and her parents where she can get help in looking after the baby after its birth.

The boy also brings worries on himself. For example, if he goes with a crowd of young people who have a reputation for loose sex conduct, he is likely to share that reputation, and may be considered responsible when a girl has a baby, even if he was not the child's father.

The possibility of getting a venereal disease is still another danger. These are diseases that are contracted through sexual contact with an infected person. You may have heard of two common ones, *syphilis* (sĭf′ ĭ lĭs) and *gonorrhea* (gŏn′ ŏ rē′ ȧ). They cause serious illness in both men and women, and if the mother has either disease while she is pregnant, the baby can suffer great harm. They can be cured if a competent physician begins treatment early enough, but all too often people who have these diseases do not go for such treatment. This means that these diseases are still rather common.

In the face of all these dangers, it is no wonder if neither the boy

nor the girl feel sure of the love of the other when they have sex relations before marriage. They feel guilty because each has done something that may harm the other, and in so doing, they have violated the principles of their religion and the ethical standards of society. The strain may be so great that their love breaks down, although if they had waited for marriage, it might have grown strong and firm. Then they might have created a happy home and family.

Managing Your Urges Through Better Living

Sex tensions are not likely to be a serious problem to you when life is full and satisfying, and when most problems can be met pretty well from day to day. Here are a few suggestions for improving your friendships, your recreation, and your personality, and for avoiding some pitfalls. You might like to check those which would be particularly useful to you.

Do you need to improve your friendships by

(1) Learning to make more friends, if you do not have many, and if you feel left out of things? (Look back at pages 38-39 for suggestions. Read the pamphlet, *Making and Keeping Friends,* by William C. Menninger, M.D. The book-list on page 51 tells you where to send for it.)

(2) Being more thoughtful about giving your friends of both sexes a square deal, by being sincere, and by treating them as you would like to be treated?

(3) Seeking more friends who like to do some of the same things you do, and who have a personality which you like and respect?

(4) Breaking up a friendship where petting is the chief or only attraction, or else putting the friendship on a different basis?

Do you need to improve your recreation by

(1) Giving your physical energies plenty of outlets by taking more part in active sports, such as hiking, climbing, swimming, tennis, badminton, baseball, bowling, and so on?

(2) Planning your dates so that you have something interesting to do and talk about, instead of petting? Boys in their younger teens usually like girls who will take part in sports, and who are good company on hikes and picnics.

(3) Developing more special interests and hobbies, such as photography, stamp collecting, or record collecting? They make you

a more interesting person, and give you something to enjoy during your spare time.

(4) Reading good fiction or other books that help you to clear up your ideas of the kind of person you want to marry, the kind of home you want to make and how families should work, play, and live together? Your English teacher, or the librarian may suggest books of this sort.

(5) Avoiding reading sensational sex publications?

Do you need to improve your personality by

(1) Learning to understand why you act the way you do? You might like to read the pamphlet, *Understanding Yourself,* by William C. Menninger, M.D..

(2) Learning to be skillful in something that is worth while doing, and that makes you feel you are a worthwhile person? Many creative hobbies and sports are helpful along this line.

Do you need to improve your ways of solving problems by

(1) Learning to talk about your school problems with teachers or special school advisers who know how to help you?

(2) Learning to talk over your disagreements with your parents in a calm and reasonable way? If your relationship with your parents is such that you feel it is quite impossible to open a discussion about your problems with either one of them, then try consulting some older person at school, or in your church. Such a person might help you to understand your parents' point of view, or help them to understand yours.

(3) Getting together with a group of your friends, and their parents and yours, to agree on a code which both parents and young people accept.

In communities where young people and their parents have agreed on a code, they have found it helpful in settling problems about such things as hours of coming home after dates and parties, having parents present in a home when there is a young people's party, the number of dates a week, the use of the family car, and so on. Young people then feel that they can do what the rest of the crowd does, but th[illegible] crowd" and the parents have agreed on what should be done. Perhaps you and your parents might form a group to prepare a code for your neighborhood or community.

Forming and Living Up to Your Ideals

"Everybody talks about Heaven ain't goin' there," as the song says, and everybody who knows what's right, doesn't always do it, as you have probably found out! Yet your sense of right and wrong is immensely important in influencing your conduct, about sex as well as other matters. Your sense of right and wrong is really your conscience, and when it makes you uncomfortable, it's time to stop and figure out why.

As a young child, you absorbed most of your ideas and standards from your parents, whether about manners, politics, or right and wrong. When you started to school, you were likely also to accept the ideas of friends and teachers whom you admired.

Now that you are in your teens, you are beginning to re-examine your ideals, and to want to make your own decisions about right and wrong. Perhaps you feel sometimes that your parents are out-of-date when they have a different opinion from your crowd. You may make a big fuss because you insist you are right, and your parents are wrong. Are you sure, then, that you do not mistake your emotional desire for independence for an intelligent decision that you should reach by a reasonable look at the facts?

After all, your parents have had much more experience in life than you on which to judge what is wise or unwise, right or wrong. In the back of your mind, you probably feel glad, after all, that they can be firm in upholding standards.

Having said this, it's only fair to add that as you grow into young adulthood, it is to be expected that you and your parents will differ on a good many things. And to say that you need to be prepared, then, to carry your own responsibility for knowing what is right and wrong.

Since you are now at an age to think seriously about your ideals and standards, you will want to become more familiar with the thought of great moral leaders and the teachings of your religion. One way of doing this is to join a group of young people at your church, or temple, or at a youth organization, who are interested in discussing religious and ethical questions. Many groups of that sort have helpful discussions of sex conduct.

Your ability to hold to your own standards may be tested rather often. You probably want to talk and dress like your crowd and do what they do. You are loyal to your crowd because you feel that you are a part of the crowd, and your crowd is a part of you. This feeling of loyalty to your group may make it hard to stand alone

and say "no" when others in the crowd do what you think is wrong, whether it is a matter of drinking, or vandalism, or sex conduct.

Of course the time when you say "no" is important. For example, if someone suggests going to a place known to be disreputable, the time for saying "no" is before you start. It is much easier then, than if you go half-way with the crowd, and then try to pluck up courage to refuse.

If you find that your sense of right and your loyalty to your crowd are often in conflict, perhaps you should find other friends. On the other hand, you may be surprised how many of the crowd will join you when you find the courage to say "no." There may be many others who feel as you do, but who need a leader to set an example.

You are old enough, too, to cultivate the strength of character to make decisions that you know will be best in the long run, even if it means temporary disappointment. Probably you have often done this in small ways, as when you have given up a movie in order to study for a test. This ability to look forward to the future helps you also to guide your relations with friends of the other sex, so that your friendship or love will grow and will not be marred by hasty actions that you will regret.

Not too many years from now you are likely to love someone whom you want to marry. Then you will want to make your love and marriage the most wonderful thing in your life and you will want to be the kind of person who can give the one you love a lifetime of happiness.

IF YOU WANT TO READ MORE ABOUT THE SUBJECT

Approaching Adulthood, by Marion O. Lerrigo, Ph.D. and Helen Southard, M.A., Milton J. E. Senn, medical consultant. American Medical Association, Chicago, Illinois, 1962.

Love and the Facts of Life, by Evelyn M. Duvall, Association Press, New York, 1963.

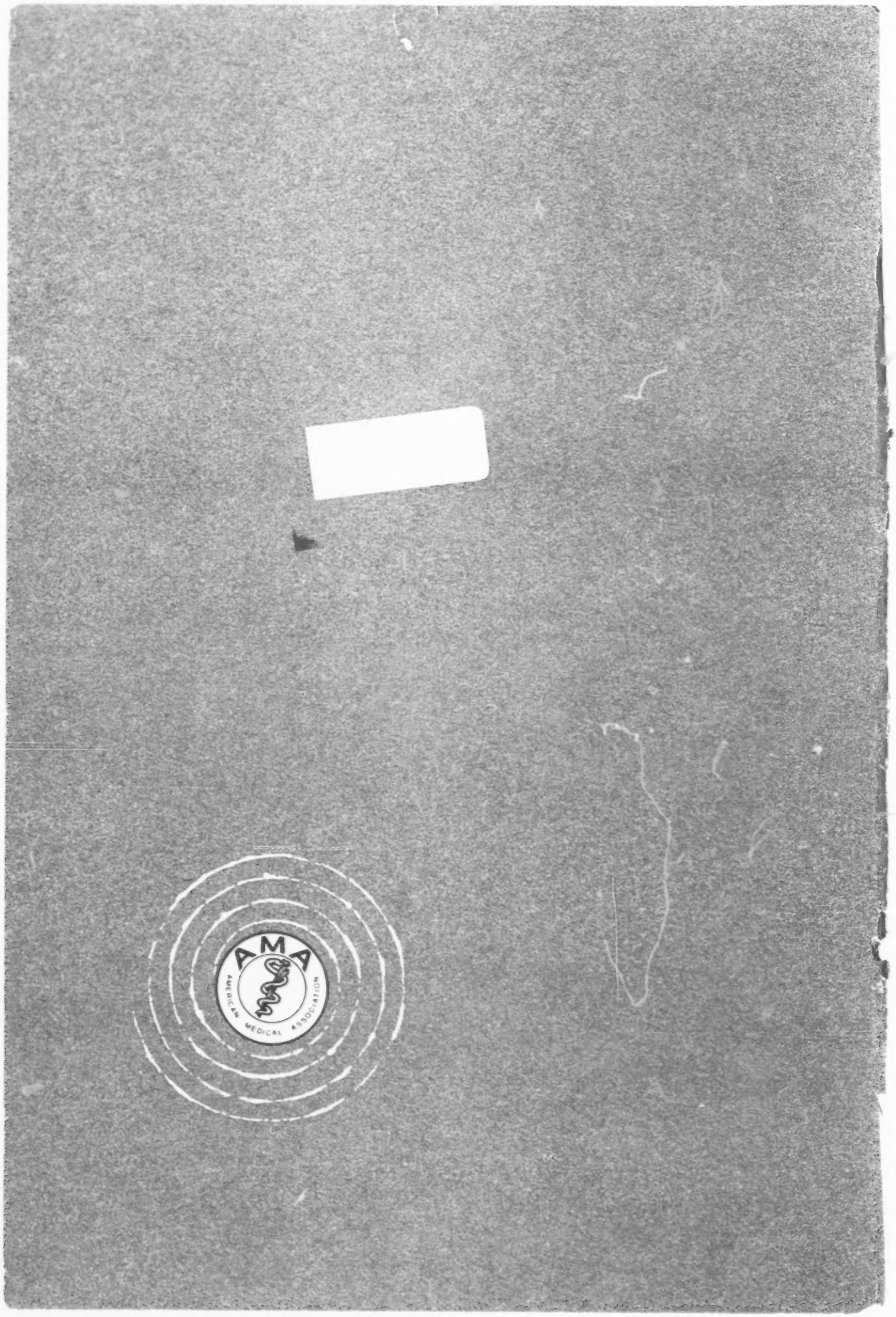
Love and Sex in Plain Language, by Eric W. Johnson, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1965.

Moving into Manhood, by Wm. W. Bauer, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1963.

Sex Before Twenty, by Helen Southard, M.A. E. P. Dutton, New York, 1967.

What Teenagers Want to Know, by Florence Levinsohn, M.A. in consultation with G. Lombard Kelly, M.D. Budlong Press, Chicago, 1962. Available in English, Spanish and French. Distributed through professional sources only. Obtainable from your physician or Budlong Press Co., 5428 N. Virginia Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60625, when remittance ($1.50) is accompanied by a prescription.

Why Wait till Marriage?, by Evelyn M. Duvall, Association Press, New York, 1965.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